

CLAIMS

1. The use of a material which includes ethylene oxide for the purpose of providing a substantially DNA free item.

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2. An item which is substantially free of DNA.

3. An item according to claim 2 which is substantially DNA free due to treatment involving contacting the item with a mixture including ethylene oxide.

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4. A method of treatment in which an item has a first pre-treatment state in which it has DNA associated with it and has a second post-treatment state in which the item is substantially free of DNA, the treatment involving contacting the item with a material which includes ethylene oxide.

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5. The method of claim 4 which further includes analysis of one or more such treated items to establish the amount of DNA associated with it after treatment.

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6. The method of claim 4 or claim 5 in which the treatment involves contacting the item with a first volume including ethylene oxide and with a second volume of ethylene oxide.

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7. A method of verifying the substantially DNA free status of an item, the method including providing the item within a package, providing a biological indicator in association with the package, the biological indicator having a first state and a second state, the biological indicator being converted to the second stage by contact with a material including ethylene oxide, the state of the biological indicator being checked to ensure it is in the second state and hence that the item is substantially DNA free before use of the item.

8. The method of claim 7 in which the biological indicator is provided inside the packaging, the biological indicator being isolated from the item in terms of DNA transfer from the biological indicator to the item.

9. The method of claim 7 or claim 8 in which the biological indicator in the second  
5 state is discernable different from the biological indicator in the first state.

10. A method for producing items in the form of one or more first products of the process and one or more second products of the process, the method including a treatment in which the items are contacted with ethylene oxide, one or more of the first products of  
10 the process being provided to a user, one or more of the second products of the process being analysed to establish whether the second product has DNA associated with it in the second post-treatment state.

11. A method according to claim 10 in which the first products of the process are the  
15 same as the second products of the process, and only differ in the use to which they are put after treatment.